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Henry Hastings Hall to William Shakespeare Hall, 14 April  
1859

Western Australia

Apl 14<sup>th</sup> 1859

Dear Shake

I can see with half an eye there has been sad mismanagement or with all their losses they would have made money, as it is they have little they could turn into money without sacrificing, & a number of Bills long overdue. At one time they owed nearly £800. I am going to investigate their affairs shortly & will tell you how they stand. They have more than enough to pay everything and if creditors can be prevailed with for the present they will recover themselves, but as a security they propose to make a deed of assignment in my favor, meantime I shall be careful to arrange with Cohen so that there will be no danger in that quarter. Besides they consider themselves considerably in my debt & I may as well be secured as a lot of strangers. To a question, they said they always looked on you as a partner but have never owned it to any one, so that if you had the luck to make money and they were embarrassed, no one could come on you – so cheer up old chap between them and me you will surely get something.

How miserably poor this land is even after eleven years manuring — and the clearing after seeing Victoria appears frightful. Frank thinks Ander was mad to marry while they were in such difficulties and indeed his prospects are anything but cheering with every chance of a large family. I think perhaps A would have done better by himself as F from all I can hear has been rather wild and spent much time in the Vasse to the detriment of the Blackwood station. Did I tell you A & F have separated. If I could clear off my debt to Cohen and retain Woongong I am certain you & I could make it pay well. I wish from my heart we had returned with Ander. If things had gone right I ought to have been in receipt of a good sum of money, now as affairs are I have not a pound nor a horse nor a head of cattle. Could I have got it I wished very much

to remit you a few pounds. I know it would be handy, but though A is very kind a few shillings is as much as he can spare at a time. Among other they owe L Leake two years Int £40.

However disagreeable our father's conduct used to be, it has been unbearable lately, and since he became aware I must sell the place, he has been continually running it down to everyone, in all the strong epithets you know him to be capable of — this might not be intentional but it is very strange conduct, of course for this and much more of a far worse character I am indebted to our brothers. Frank he doats [*sic*] upon, although I don't think F cares a straw about *him*. I am held in very good esteem at present, but A & Lucy & her family he is very bitter against. I did not hand him the letter from you, as his mind was not in a fit state to think of anything, as I considered he had injured me by speaking ill of the place, but I [*?freely*] forgive him and hope he may be pardoned where it will be of more importance. When he was farming the Murray land he got in debt to McLartys and several others, telling them I owed him three or four hundred pounds and would return from the diggings shortly. He behaved very badly to Ander after his marriage, locking up all linen, plate and many really trifling things, and told him he would not have a horse or head of cattle on the place – and has never allowed his room to be entered or cleaned since our mother's death. I am much grieved that he should so trouble himself to set everybody against him — but I suppose it is the way with many old people.

I hope my dear brother you will manage to scratch along for a short time and as soon as I have anything in my power I will not lose a minute. You have been my best friend and if I am spared you shall never have cause to regret your kindness. May the Lord in his mercy keep you from harm.

Your ever affect bro<sup>r</sup>

H H Hall

Tell me all you know about Bouglass, where he was and what doing when you last heard of or saw him and when it was